

## PA-01 Member of Congress Tracking Report - 10/20/19

This is a 100% volunteer effort brought to you by a handful of progressive Democrats and Independents who share a vision of an informed electorate. We want to offer a big thank you to the [Pennsylvania Together](#), [Pennsylvania Statewide Indivisible](#) and [Demcast](#) organizations who host our report and help us share it out to the residents of our Commonwealth!

### Tracking Congress in the Age of Trump

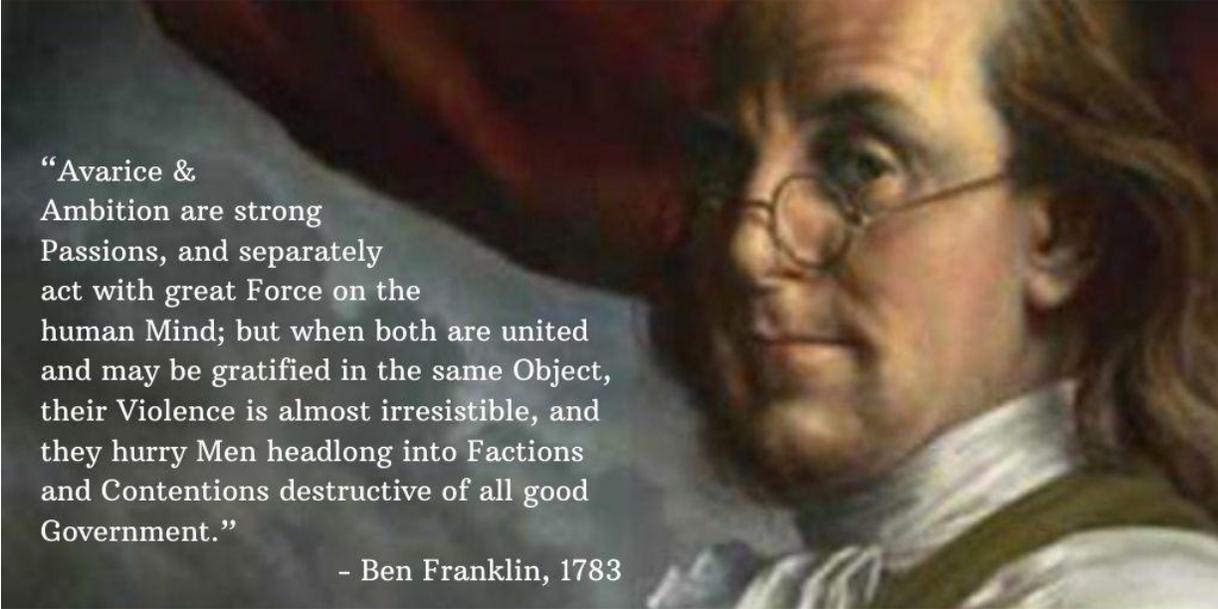
The lower the number, the more the legislator votes in opposition to the Trump agenda.

Member of Congress	This week's score	Change from last report
<a href="#">Senator Bob Casey (D)</a>	<b>28.4%</b>	<b>-0.3%</b>
<a href="#">Senator Pat Toomey (R)</a>	<b>87.6%</b>	<b>+0.1%</b>
<a href="#">PA-01 Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick (R)</a>	<b>68.3%</b>	<b>-0.2%</b>

Nate Silver's [FiveThirtyEight website](#) assesses the voting records of our MoCs to provide this index, by comparing any legislation where President Trump has stated a position, and comparing the vote of each MoC to the President's opinion. One Senate vote was scored this week, related to the EPA; while two House votes were included, on Syria and investor disclosures.

Want to see exactly what votes went into giving your MoC the numbers above? Click on the name of any legislator and you will be brought to their 538 webpage, where all of the positions that went into the index are listed in an easy-to-read format.

### Words From Our Founders



“Avarice & Ambition are strong Passions, and separately act with great Force on the human Mind; but when both are united and may be gratified in the same Object, their Violence is almost irresistible, and they hurry Men headlong into Factions and Contentions destructive of all good Government.”

- Ben Franklin, 1783

— [Benjamin Franklin's 1783 letter to Jonathan Shipley](#)

### Votes of Interest

House votes to reject the president's actions on Turkey, Syria and the Kurds

[House Vote](#) on [H.J.Res. 77](#): Opposing the decision to end certain United States efforts to prevent Turkish military operations against Syrian Kurdish forces in Northeast Syria.

This [resolution](#) is constructed in the traditional manner, with a selection of ‘whereas’ statements that lay out the facts of the situation, followed by a series of resolutions that define the position of the Congress and the actions that they want to see going forward. It begins by explaining the level of support that Syrian Kurds provided to United States armed forces in our fight against ISIS. That is followed by a series of quotes from respected experts (like then-Director of National Intelligence Dan Coats, Special Envoy James Jeffrey and the Lead Inspector General for Combined Joint Task Force Operation Inherent Resolve) who had made statements earlier this year about the situation on the ground, and the attempts of an ISIS resurgence that was being held in check by the Kurds. The ‘whereas’ section concludes with this statement of facts:

Whereas, on October 6, 2019, President Trump conducted a call with President Erdogan in which, according to the official White House press release, they discussed the upcoming Turkish incursion, and soon after this call, a White House press release announced the withdrawal of the United States military from the immediate area, which was completed within hours; and

Whereas an abrupt withdrawal of United States military personnel from certain parts of Northeast Syria is beneficial to adversaries of the United States government, including Syria, Iran, and Russia

Then the resolution lays out the five conclusions and actions. Those are paraphrased below, unless otherwise indicated:

1. Congress opposes the withdrawal of US troops that had prevented a Turkish attack
2. Congress calls on Turkey to stop their attacks
3. Congress calls on the US to support Kurish communities, including helping displaced people
4. Congress wants our foreign services to “ensure that the Turkish military acts with restraint and respects existing agreements”
5. Congress “calls on the White House to present a clear and specific plan for the enduring defeat of ISIS”

The resolution was introduced by Rep. Eliot Engel (D-N.Y.), the chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee. He made a [floor statement](#) in support of this effort that is worth reading in its entirety. The closing of that speech is excerpted here:

At President Trump’s hands, American leadership has been laid low and American foreign policy has become nothing more than a tool to advance his own interests. Today we make clear that the Congress is a coequal branch of government, and we want nothing to do with this disastrous policy. ...I say to our colleagues—it is on us. It is on us to uphold our country’s values, to strengthen our national security, to defend America’s standing in the world. I call on all members on both sides of the aisle to support this resolution and make it clear where we stand.

The House voted on this resolution on Wednesday, October 16, 2019. They did so under a suspension of the rules, meaning that a  $\frac{2}{3}$  supermajority was needed to pass the measure. The final vote was 354-60, surpassing that supermajority threshold by a considerable margin. The Democrats were unified in their support of the resolution, and they were joined by 129 Republicans. In addition to the 60 Republicans who voted NO, there were also three who voted “Present”, and they were joined by Independent Rep. Amash. **Fitzpatrick voted YES.**

It was this vote and resolution that prompted the heated meeting in the White House that results in the new infamous image of Speaker Pelosi across a table from the president. *The [New York Times](#)* reports:

It enraged the president, who lashed out at Democratic congressional leaders at the White House shortly afterward at a meeting called to discuss the incursion, which devolved into a bitter confrontation in which he hurled insults at Speaker Nancy Pelosi

after she pointedly mentioned the devastating vote tally. “He was shaken up by it,” Ms. Pelosi said of the resounding support, including by Republicans, for the resolution.

This is a quickly evolving situation. In the time since the vote on this resolution the [President announced a cease fire](#), which Turkey quickly clarified was merely a “[pause](#)” in hostilities. And even that pause appears to not reflect reality, with [reports](#) of ongoing shelling and use of chemical weapons. Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer [attempted](#) to bring this resolution up in the Senate via unanimous consent, but was blocked by Sen. Rand Paul. And, just as this report was wrapping for the week, news dropped that House Speaker Nancy Pelosi led a [bipartisan delegation](#) of House members to Jordan to “discuss the fallout from Donald Trump’s decision to withdraw US troops from neighbouring Syria,” according to *The Guardian*. There were no Pennsylvania MoCs in the delegation.

Next week’s report will no doubt contain more legislative response to the situation with Turkey, Syria and the Kurds. [CNN Politics](#) reports that Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell said he was “encouraged” to see the bipartisan action in the House, but then added:

As the Senate debates our Middle East policy and contemplates what action to take, I believe it is important that we make a strong, forward-looking, strategic statement... My preference would be for something even stronger than the resolution the House passed yesterday, which has some serious weaknesses. It is so narrowly drafted that it fails to address the plight of imperiled Sunni Arab and minority Christian communities in Syria. It is backward-looking. And it is curiously silent on the issue of whether to actually sustain a US military presence in Syria, perhaps to spare Democrats from having to go on the record on this key question.

Expect a lot more debate and legislation, perhaps including a sanctions package, in the coming weeks.

### **The House moves to assess Securities and Exchange Commission rules on disclosures** [House Vote](#) on [H.R. 1815](#): SEC Disclosure Effectiveness Testing Act

This is a bill that seeks to address the problem of corporate disclosures to retail investors. There are any number of rules about what information companies need to provide to their stockholders. However, most such statements are so laden with jargon and small print that they are all but useless to everyone but corporate attorneys and industry professionals.

In a [statement](#) made supporting the bill, sponsor Rep. Sean Casten (D-Ill.) said:

Whether it is buying a house, sending your kids to college, investing in your retirement, or just saving for a rainy day, the American dream depends on our ability to invest in our future. This bill protects Americans by doing basic market research to ensure that legally required disclosures can be understood by the average investor.

This bill was supported by the [Consumer Federation of America](#) (CFA), a coalition of hundreds of non-profit consumer groups that “advance the consumer interest through research, advocacy, and education.” The CFA issued a [letter](#) in support of this measure that explains the nature of the issue the bill seeks to address:

The sad reality is that the disclosures investors receive when choosing investment professionals or evaluating investment options often do a poor job of conveying critically important information in a way that typical retail investors can understand. This includes cost disclosures that don’t clearly convey costs, risk disclosures that don’t clearly convey risks, and conflict of interest disclosure that do not clearly convey the nature or impact of those conflicts.

Then, the CFA noted that this new bill would require the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) to “incorporate qualitative disclosure effectiveness testing in the development of new disclosures designed for retail investors.” This bill would not simply affect new disclosures, but also tasks the SEC “to develop a plan for testing existing retail disclosures.”

[Investment News](#) reports that “When Mr. Casten's bill was debated by the House committee, Republicans opposed it, saying that it would slow the SEC's consideration of advice reform, the centerpiece of which is Regulation Best Interest for brokers.” However, in light of how many of our Pennsylvania GOP MoCs have website statements that use typical Republican talking points about “burdensome regulations,” there is little doubt that the party line vote belies their unwillingness to promote research that may reveal a need to change existing business practices.

This vote was taken on Thursday, October 17, 2019. It passed, 229-186, along purely party lines. Independent Rep. Amash joined the GOP for this vote. **Fitzpatrick voted NO.**

### **The House demands transparency on corporate outsourcing**

[House Vote](#) on [H.R. 3624](#): Outsourcing Accountability Act of 2019

The House took on another aspect of corporate disclosures by considering legislation that would require companies to reveal their outsourcing practices. The bill's sponsor, Rep. Cynthia Axne (D-Iowa), explained the measure in a [letter](#) to her colleagues:

H.R. 3624 would inform investors and the public of public companies' outsourcing practices by requiring them to annually disclose the total number of employees they employ in each state and foreign country, as well as the percentage change from the previous year... Companies frequently go to great lengths to hide when they cut American jobs to save money in other countries, since the only information they are required to report is their total number of employees. H.R. 3624 would address this informational barrier and help investors, the public, and policymakers understand the true magnitude of the problem of outsourcing by requiring public companies to include in their public, annual reports the number of employees they and their subsidiaries have in each state and country.

In their reporting on this legislation, industry periodical [HR Policy](#) noted that opposition to this effort from the Republicans could be summed up in the statement of Rep. Bill Huizenga (R - Mich.), who questioned the value to shareholders and the public, of Congress adding “another reporting requirement to an already vast list of information public companies must disclose.” That same article noted that the Senate companion bill, [S. 1843](#) introduced by Sen. Gary Peters (D-Mich.), has not made it out of committee. That may be of interest to us in Pennsylvania, as our own Sen. Pat Toomey is on the Senate Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Committee where the Senate version is stalled.

The vote on H.R. 3624 took place on Friday, October 18, 2019. The legislation passed 226-184. All Democrats present voted in favor of the measure, and they were joined by two Republicans (Chris Smith of N.J. and David McKinley of W.V.). **Fitzpatrick voted NO.**

### **The Senate fails to overturn a Trump rule to weaken the Environmental Protection Agency**

[Senate Vote](#) on [S.J. Res. 53](#): providing for congressional disapproval of the rule submitted by the Environmental Protection Agency relating to “Repeal of the Clean Power Plan”

The Congressional Review Act is a mechanism that can be used to overturn the rules of bureaucratic agencies. [Vox](#) explains that it “gives Congress extensive power to invalidate rules established by federal agencies and, in doing so, making it more difficult for any future administrations to resurrect the policies that lawmakers have struck down.” The 115th Congress used the CRA to invalidate many Obama-era rules, like when the majority GOP Congress repealed a rule that made it harder for severely mentally ill people to get guns ([H.J. Res. 40](#) - 115th)... or when they repealed a rule that forbade internet service providers from selling your browser history to third parties ([S.J. Res. 34](#) - 115th)... or when they repealed a rule that, according to [NBC News](#), “prohibited from shooting or trapping wolves while at their dens with cubs, using airplanes to scout for potential grizzly bear targets, trapping bears with wire snares and luring bears with food to get a point-blank kill” ([H.J. Res. 69](#) - 115th).

This week the Senate Democrats used the provisions of the CRA to force a bill to the floor to object to President Trump's efforts to weaken power plant emissions regulations. [E&E News](#), an excellent source for information related to energy and the environment, explains that the Trump Administration released the Affordable Clean Energy (ACE) Plan to replace the Obama-era Clean Power Plan. ACE "repealed the statewide emissions caps of the Clean Power Plan and replaced it with a less stringent regulation focused on upgrades at individual power plants." *E&E News* also reports that "in some cases, the ACE rule's focus on heat-rate efficiency improvements could lead coal-fired power plants to run more frequently, thus increasing pollution, according to EPA's analysis."

[The Hill](#) explains how Democrats used provisions in the CRA to force a floor vote on this policy: Democrats were able to bring the vote to the floor through the Congressional Review Act (CRA), a seldom-used legal maneuver that requires the signature of just 30 senators. The CRA allows Congress to review and overturn rules implemented by the executive branch within 60 days after they have been finalized. The so-called disapproval resolution needs only a majority vote to pass.

The vote on this joint resolution was taken on Thursday, October 17, 2019. The final vote was 41-53, so the measure failed. Thirty-nine Democrats were joined by Republican Susan Collins (Maine) and Independent Angus King (Maine) in voting YES. Fifty Republicans voted NO, and they were joined by Democrats Doug Jones (Ala.), Kyrsten Sinema (Ariz.) and Joe Manchin (W.V.). Presidential candidates Kamala Harris, Amy Klobuchar, Cory Booker, and Bernie Sanders did not vote. **Casey voted YES and Toomey voted NO.**

Our senior senator had something to say in the wake of this vote:

□ **Senator Bob Casey, @SenBobCasey, 10/17/19:**

"I stand in opposition to Trump's so called Affordable Clean Energy Rule because this Administration's continued rollbacks of our bedrock environmental protections are a reckless abandonment of our communities and future generations who depend on us to combat the climate crisis. The climate crisis is here now and we have a responsibility to take immediate action. The ACE Rule is nothing more than a scam by corporate polluters that drastically limits our ability to cut carbon pollution and meaningfully tackle the climate crisis. This is yet another decision by the Trump Administration to favor corporate interests over the health of our kids and communities. I will continue to oppose this Administration's continued rollbacks of environmental protections and demand meaningful action on climate change."

**The Senate fails to overturn the president's veto on the fake national emergency, take two** [Senate Vote](#) on [S.J. Res. 54](#): relating to a national emergency declared by the President

Under the provisions of the 1976 National Emergencies Act, the Congress can take votes to end a president's national emergency declaration once every six months. The President has the opportunity to veto such a vote, and then both houses would have to overcome the veto with a 2/3 supermajority for the emergency to end. This process played out in February and March, with majorities in each house voting to end the emergency, but without enough votes to overturn the veto.

Six months later, in late September, [majorities in both houses voted again to](#) end the emergency that the President is using to raid already-appropriated funds to pay for his border wall. During the recess at the start of October, President Trump again [vetoed](#) the attempt to end his fake national emergency.

The Senate attempted to overcome this veto in a vote on Thursday, October 17, 2019. The final vote was 53-36, and the [veto was sustained](#). This vote tally looks quite different from the 59-41 vote from March, but no one changed their position. The difference in numbers reflects 11 senators placing "no vote" when they had previously placed YES or NO votes. **Casey voted YES** (to overturn the veto) and **Toomey voted YES** as well.

If you'd like a refresher on the history of presidential emergency powers and the National Emergencies Act of 1976 so that you are ready when this action repeats itself for a third time next February, please see this [Learning About Legislation segment](#) from earlier this year.

### **Judicial confirmation of another white, male, Federalist Society member** [Senate Vote](#) on Charles Eskridge's nomination to the US District Court in Texas

This week the Senate considered the nomination of Charles Eskridge to a position on the federal bench in Texas. Mr. Eskridge has considerable legal experience, but his political entanglements invite questions about his ability to be impartial.

Eskridge started his career as an attorney by clerking first for a judge on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit, and then for Supreme Court Justice Byron White, an appointee of President Kennedy. Once he entered private practice, Mr. Eskridge spent over twenty years at the same Houston firm, Susman Godfrey LLP, where he became a partner in 1997. In reporting on his confirmation, the [Houston Chronicle](#) noted that "Eskridge has also represented captains of industry, including Lehman Brothers International in Europe in the wake of the financial crisis." Eskridge's profile on the [Federalist Society](#) website, where he is a member, notes that he represented "the interests of the London Insurance Market during the asbestos bankruptcy crisis." And, according to the [Vetting Room](#), the nominee has been representing offshore drilling corporations since 2015, when he joined a new firm.

Mr. Eskridge does have experience handling cases with a more progressive bent. The [Houston Chronicle](#) article notes that "...he worked pro bono on behalf of Anthony Graves, a former death row inmate who was exonerated after 18 years in prison, to get the prosecutor on the case disbarred for ethical and professional rule violations." And the [Federalist Society](#) piece cited his work for "an operating system technology company in groundbreaking antitrust action against Microsoft."

The biggest concerns about the nominee come from both his involvement with the Federalist Society and his advocacy on behalf of many Republican candidates in Texas over the past decades. The [Vetting Room](#) reports:

Eskridge has been very active in the Texas Republican Party for many years, including volunteering for the campaigns of Cornyn, Cruz, and former Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison. In addition, Eskridge was a prolific donor to Republicans, giving over \$100,000 since 2000... Eskridge has donated more money than almost every other judicial candidate put forward by the Trump Administration.

The confirmation vote on Charles Eskridge took place on Wednesday, October 16, 2019. He was confirmed 61-31. He had unanimous support of the GOP majority in the Senate, and received ten YES votes from Democrats. **Casey voted NO** and **Toomey voted YES**.

### **We have a new Air Force Secretary** [Senate Vote](#) on Barbara McConnell Barrett to be Secretary of the Air Force

On Wednesday the Senate confirmed Barbara McConnell Barrett to be the new Secretary of the Air Force, a position that has been filled in an acting capacity since the departure of the last secretary in May. The industry site [Space Policy Online](#) provided the following recap of Secretary Barrett's career: Barrett, 68, is owner of the Triple Creek Ranch, a luxury ranch resort, in Darby, Montana, but has served in several government positions over the decades. She was deputy administrator of the FAA (1987-1988) and vice chairman of the Civil Aeronautics Board (1982-1985) under President Reagan, and was U.S Ambassador to Finland from 2008-2009.

She is a member of the Board of Trustees of the California Institute of Technology (Caltech), which operates the Jet Propulsion Laboratory for NASA, and of the RAND Corporation. She is also a Life Director of the Space Foundation.

An instrument-rated pilot, she is the first civilian woman to land an F/A-18 Hornet on an aircraft carrier according to a June 2018 profile in Arizona's Chamber Business News. She was inducted into the Arizona Aviation Hall of Fame in 2013.

While the new secretary received the support of most of the Senate, her nomination was held up over concerns that she is unwilling to curb some of President Trump's more egregious policies. In addition to being a full supporter of the President's Space Force plan, [Air Force Times](#) reports that Barrett was unwilling to provide assurance the Senate that she would stop President Trump's practice of using military overnight stays at Trump private properties to bolster his business profits:

Her nomination was put on hold for several weeks by Sen. Richard Blumenthal, D-Conn., who was seeking her assurances that airmen would no longer stay at properties owned by President Donald Trump.

Over the past four or five years, the Air Force has increasingly used Glasgow Prestwick Airport in Scotland as a stopover for aircrews transiting the globe, and airmen have on occasion stayed at Trump Turnberry golf resort, about 45 miles away. As of September, the Pentagon had spent almost \$200,000 for lodgings at the resort.

Barrett did not provide those assurances, and Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell was ultimately forced to hold procedural votes to get to Barrett's confirmation vote.

The vote on Barrett's nomination was taken on Wednesday, October 16, 2019. She was confirmed with a 85-7 vote. The seven NO votes were all from Democrats (Richard Blumenthal of Conn., Tammy Duckworth of Ill., Ed Markey of Mass., Tina Smith of Minn., Kirsten Gillibrand of N.Y., and Jeff Merkley and Ron Wyden of Ore.). **Casey voted YES and Toomey voted YES.**

## Our MoCs respond to the passing of Representative Elijah Cummings

### ☐ **Senator Bob Casey, @SenBobCasey, [10/17/19](#):**

"Chairman Cummings committed his life to the pursuit of justice. A champion of civil rights, he never forgot his Baltimore roots as he faithfully served the people of Maryland and the nation. Few in public life have served with more courage and he leaves a remarkable legacy."

### ☐ **Senator Pat Toomey had no statement on Twitter, Facebook or his official website**

### ☐ **PA-01's Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick, @RepBrianFitz, [10/17/19](#):**

"So sad to hear about the passing of my colleague from Maryland, Congressman Elijah Cummins. It was an honor to serve with him in Congress and on the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. He was a dedicated public servant, a skilled legislator, and a good man. My prayers go out to his family and staff during this difficult time." *tweeted with a link to an article in [The Hill](#)*

## Our MoCs' latest commentary on the Impeachment Inquiry

None of our lawmakers have changed their positions on the inquiry, but some have shared some additional thoughts since our last report.

□ **Senator Bob Casey, @SenBobCasey:**

*The Senator does not have any new content on his social media related to impeachment. However, his pinned tweet is one from [09/25/19](#) that reads, "Today, I am calling for President Trump's impeachment. Read my [full statement here](#)"*

□ **PA-01's Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick:**

*None of the MoC's online presences have any acknowledgement of the existence of the impeachment inquiry. This quote is from a [10/18/19 article in the Allentown Morning Call](#). "I think everybody has demonstrated poor judgment in this whole Ukraine situation. Do I think anyone committed a crime? I haven't seen evidence of that."*

## MoC Twitter Action

*Contributed by Helen, aka @ElastigirlVotes on Twitter*

### Twitter Action - Syrian disaster

□ **Senator Bob Casey, @SenBobCasey, [10/18/19](#):**

*"And the 'ceasefire' didn't even hold a full day. To quote a Turkish official: 'We got everything we wanted... It was as easy a negotiation as we've ever had.'" Tweet includes [link](#) to NBC article. And also QT's this [thread](#).*

### Twitter Action - G7 / emoluments

□ **Senator Bob Casey, @SenBobCasey, [10/18/19](#):**

*"This is a former director of the Office of Government Ethics. Any questions?"  
The tweet quotes Walter Shaub's [tweet](#).*



**Walter Shaub** ✓  
@waltshaub

Don't lose sight of the G-7 award to Doral today. A president participating in a contract award to himself is an impeachable act.

7:38 AM · Oct 18, 2019 · [Twitter Web App](#)

### Twitter Action - promoted legislation

□ **Senator Bob Casey, @SenBobCasey, [10/16/19](#):**

*"Family violence, domestic violence, and dating violence are a public health crisis. @lisamurkowski and I have a bill that will provide vital services for victims and their children. We must all work together to end violence in our homes and communities." retweeted with content from an [activist](#) promoting S.2259*

□ **Senator Pat Toomey, @SenToomey, [10/10/19](#):**

*"The Zezzo family of Berks County was repeatedly terrorized by a cyberstalker. I've introduced bipartisan legislation so deviants who exploit the internet to stalk children can be strongly punished. The Senate should move quickly to pass this bill." tweeted with an embedded video clip from a local Fox affiliate*

□ **PA-01's Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick, @RepBrianFitz, 10/17/19:**

"Proud to join my colleague @RepTomSuozzi to support the Never Again Education Act. This bipartisan legislation would help fund programs to teach about the Holocaust. We have a moral obligation to teach about & learn from the Holocaust, so that it never happens again. #NeverAgain" *shared with content from the [World Jewish Congress](#) that features video of Rep. Fitzpatrick and Rep. Suozzi*

## **Tweet of the Week**

□ **Senator Bob Casey, @SenBobCasey, 10/19/19:**

"WELL, we didn't elect a President who sent emails from the wrong account, but electing a corrupt authoritarian who has tried to take health care from millions, ripped migrant children from their parents and used the presidency to enrich himself and his family HAS NOT BEEN GREAT." *Tweet included [link](#) to Washington Post Article.*

## **Casey in the News**

*Courtesy of contributor Linda Houk*

"The Turkish attacks against the Kurds are attacks against humanity, and our President is sitting back and watching,"

—from an article on *WSB-TV* titled "[As Congress returns, both parties are livid over Trump move in Syria](#)"

"It's a bad, bad result for America if this succeeds... As the case continues to wind its way through the legal system, it is imperative that policymakers pursue real health care reform... Politicians have long promised to replace Obamacare with solutions that help everyone. It's time to deliver — no matter which way the courts go."

—from an opinion piece in *the Reading Eagle* titled "[Editorial: Health coverage shouldn't hinge on court ruling](#)"

"We must dispel our loved ones of the stigma associated with falling so that they can get the help they need to age in place — where they want to be — in their homes and communities. I am hopeful that our work over the past year will propel the research community to do more, get more dollars invested into supporting home modifications and encourage more older adults to be active."

—from an article in the *Bradford Era* titled "[Casey holds hearing on preventing falls for seniors](#)"

"The false choice is that you have to choose fracking over good climate policy,"

—from an article on *KDKA-2* titled "[Pennsylvania Democrats Send Warning To Democratic Candidates Ahead Of Ohio Debate](#)"

"When you have that kind of a cost and that kind of an adverse impact, especially on seniors, we want to make sure we're taking steps to prevent these falls in the first place."

—from an article in *Erie News Now* titled "[Casey releases report on senior falls prevention](#)"

"In the aftermath of that bad decision, we now have to take steps to try to mitigate"

—from an article in *Erie News Now* titled "[Pa. lawmakers oppose Trump's troop withdrawal in Syria](#)"

Senator Casey also participated in an extended interview with Pittsburgh's CBS affiliate that resulted in an article titled "[Senator Bob Casey Goes On Offense Over Healthcare, Guns, Turkey, And Impeachment](#)." Here are some excerpts from that piece:

- On Medicaid - "The Republican position, the official position, is to wipe out Medicaid expansion... so they are basically saying, they're kind of giving the middle finger to about 750,000 people in our state who have insurance only because of Medicaid expansion."
- On threats to health care - "Census Bureau tells us 1.9 million fewer Americans have health insurance than when President Trump started, so the sabotage of the system, unfortunately, has worked."
- On gun reform - "If we do nothing, if we take no action, if we don't even debate it in the United States Senate, we are surrendering to a problem."
- On the effects of the President's actions with Turkey and the Kurds - "Now we have the possibility that ISIS will be reconstituted. That's the real problem, that ISIS now could have a second act, in a sense."
- On impeachment - "The evidence there is as clear as day that the President abused his power. I think it was a textbook case of abuse of power."

### **Fitzpatrick in the News**

"Does anybody think the chairman and ranking member of the Intelligence Committee are going to find facts and get to the truth here? No."

— from the *Allentown Morning Call* article titled "[How Pennsylvania congressman's short FBI stint in Ukraine shapes his view of Trump impeachment probe](#)"

"The way it is now, it will be hard to get at the truth with so much partisanship and divisiveness going on. With allegations like this, I believe in letting law enforcement take a look at this and then reporting the facts to Congress. The bar for impeachment is set very high. We have to be very judicious and cautious on how we proceed with that..."

"...My favorite president was George Washington, who wanted to serve one term and then go back to Mount Vernon but was talked into a second term. I believe you should not make a career out of politics. I think you should serve your time and then make way for somebody else, so no, I will not be running for president."

— from a *Bucks County Courier Times* article titled "[Fitzpatrick talks impeachment with Truman students. And whether he wants to be president.](#)"

"This is a terrible decision and it sends a terrible message."

— from an article in the *Allentown Morning Call* titled "[Two Pennsylvania Republican lawmakers criticize President Trump's decision to pull back U.S. troops in Syria](#)"

"For this health study to provide reliable data, that we're going to base decisions on, it has to continue. You can't have a health study that starts, stops, and restarts again; it's not going to give you good data. Anybody who would get in the way of continued funding is going to have to answer to that. Not only are they not fulfilling the mission, they're actually flushing down the drain the money that's already been spent in previous years. You can't get an answer in one year."

— from an article in *The Reporter Online* titled "[Lawmakers announced \\$1M grant for PFAS health study](#)"

"It is unacceptable that the Defense Department put the health of Pennsylvania families at risk with these chemicals, whether it was intended or unintended. Every American has a right to clean drinking water. The federal government created this health crisis and it is important that the government is

starting to take responsibility. I'm happy to see that the Inspector General will be further reviewing this issue and look forward to seeing their report."

— from an article in the *Pennsylvania Capital Star* titled "[Pentagon's Inspector General's office will study PFAS use at military bases](#)"

"Giving the Turkish government license to attack our Kurdish friends sends the wrong message to our allies across the globe. Abandoning our allies who have fought alongside us is a terrible mistake that will cost our allies their lives and undermines United States credibility on the international stage."

— from an article in the *Pennsylvania Capital Star* titled "[U.S. House overwhelmingly votes to condemn Trump's Syrian troop withdrawal](#)"

"Every family, especially children, deserves to live in a household free from contaminants and lead hazards. This grant will protect Bucks County families by targeting and eliminating hazards that harm their overall quality of life."

— from a *Bucks County Courier Times* article titled "[Bucks County homes are at 'increased risk' from lead paint. A new \\$1.5M grant aims to help](#)"

"With the American public overwhelmingly seeking fixes to our crumbling roads and bridges while searching for solutions to mitigate the dangerous effects of climate change, our bipartisan bill is a dynamic solution that seeks to tackle both problems. It doesn't have to be a tough choice."

—from a *Ripon Advance* blog post titled "[Fitzpatrick's climate change bill funds maintenance, construction of U.S. infrastructure](#)"

**Fitzpatrick, Ukraine and Impeachment** - Over the past few weeks, Rep. Fitzpatrick has received increasing levels of media attention for his time in the Ukraine on behalf of an FBI anti-corruption effort. His time there overlaps with events cited in Trump Administration talking points. Below you will find links to audio interviews with Rep. Fitzpatrick and news coverage about him in relation to the Impeachment Inquiry:

1. *Levittown Now* article titled "[Congressman Fitzpatrick Talks About Time In Ukraine Amid President Trump Scandal](#)" - this article provides an outline of the Congressman's involvement in Ukraine, and has some of his feedback about the current Congressional actions.
2. *NPR Weekend Edition Sunday* audio piece titled "[Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick In Unique Position On Ukraine](#)" - this is a four minute piece that lays out the basics of Fitzpatrick's assignment in Ukraine, and includes constituent feedback (including a quote from a MoCTrack editor) critiquing the Congressman's reticence to back the impeachment inquiry
3. *Lancaster Online's* article originally titled "[These two PA congressmen received campaign contributions from Giuliani's arrested associates](#)" - unfortunately this article, which has since had it's title updated, is now behind a paywall. But it provides information about the political donations of Lev Parnas and Igor Fruman, two Giuliani/Trump cronies, who funnelled illegal foreign donations into the coffers of Rep. Fitzpatrick and Rep. Smuckers' campaigns
4. *Levittown Now's* article titled "[Congressman To Donate Contribution From Man Indicted In Campaign Finance Scheme](#)" - this covers much the same content as the *Lancaster Online* article.
5. *Allentown Morning Calls's* article titled "[How Pennsylvania congressman's short FBI stint in Ukraine shapes his view of Trump impeachment probe](#)" - this piece reiterates many of the Representative's previously made points about wanting law enforcement to direct the investigation into the whistleblower's complaints, which continuing to ignore the fact that when law enforcement had their change, Attorney General Barr quashed their efforts.
6. *WHYY Radio Times from 10/02/19* - this is a 13 minute audio interview with Rep. Fitzpatrick. A MoCTrack contributor was kind enough to transcribe portions of this interview, and those quotes are included below:
  - **On investigating the whistleblower's accusations** - "A very serious allegation that was made that I believe we need to look into. My only objection, Marty, I don't think it's a good idea before we know the facts to launch this inquiry in the context of an impeachment inquiry because

that's a very, very serious step to take, and I think we need to be very judicious about how we proceed.

Now, is it a very serious allegation? Of course it is. Do we need to get to the bottom of it? Absolutely. But we can do this in another context. So the allegations that were made previously were investigated by my former boss, Bob Mueller. I supported that investigation.

Our job as FBI agents has always been to follow the facts wherever they lead and report those facts with unimpeachable integrity. Where it becomes a problem is when it gets taken out of the law enforcement context and into the realm of politics, because then people lose confidence on the motives behind the decisions being made.

I think there's no question right now that this, that we are proceeding largely based on partisanship and politics, which is very disappointing, because this is a serious allegation, we do need to get to the bottom of it and we need to remove politics out of the equation—and that's just not what's happening right now, unfortunately.

- **On his objections to using an impeachment inquiry to facilitate the investigation** - "We can subpoena those witnesses and those documents outside the context of an impeachment right out of the chute and, moreover, the concern with many of us—and believe me, I'm a lifelong FBI agent, a lifelong investigator. I'm all about non-partisan fact finding missions. That's what I've done my whole life. But the way we proceeded here, right from the get-go, we haven't even had a vote on the inquiry itself, and if you look at past precedent for impeachment proceedings, most recently with President Clinton in 1998, there was a vote in advance to start going down this road. We have not had that.

Secondly, the committee of jurisdiction is supposed to be the Judiciary Committee. It's been taken out of that committee and put in the Intel Committee.

So there's a lot of things going on here that are just a little bit—more than a little bit, a lot—concerning to people like myself who legitimately want to get to the bottom of this in a nonpartisan fashion because this is really important. It's important that we get to the bottom of what the allegation is and the credibility and the corroboration of it.

And also, we're setting precedents with everything we do and don't do here with regard to impeachment, and I think that that's a very, very significant—it's probably the second most significant action that a member of Congress can take, second only to sending people's children into battle. It's something we need to take very seriously; we need to proceed cautiously and that's not the sense of what myself and many of my colleagues are seeing right now."

- **On the Attorney General and others working with foreign governments to undermine the work of the FBI and CIA** - "Well, what should happen should be in the law enforcement context. I've made the statement repeatedly, whether or not to initiate an investigation and whether or not to close an investigation in the conduct of an open investigation, what steps to take and not take, are decisions that should be made by law enforcement and law enforcement alone. They should not be made by politicians at all, and that's one of the things I've objected to with the stories that have been or the allegations that have been made both against the President and our previous Vice President. That is not a role politicians should play. That should be left in the realm of law enforcement. These are the women and men who are professionals, who are not partisan, and who do the job of following the facts and reporting those facts with unimpeachable integrity. That's why I'm a fan of investigations, but non-partisan law enforcement investigations."
- **On President Trump calling the whistleblowers "spies"** - "I don't know what he's basing that on. I'll give you my assessment, that the whistleblower ought to be assumed to be credible

as he has been deemed, or she has been deemed, until proven otherwise. But we have a mission now. We have an anonymous complaint, six or seven pages, based largely, if not exclusively on hearsay, so our job is to get to the bottom of that now. And I think we need to get to the bottom of it, and I think we should leave the name-calling out of it and I think we need to leave the partisan politics out of it. Unfortunately, we haven't seen that up until this point. "

## Toomey in the News

*Courtesy of contributor Elayne Baker*

"There is, I think, latitude in our system to have errors of judgment and inappropriate actions remedied through the political process. It's called an election... "It was inappropriate for the president to make a reference to a potential political opponent in the context of an investigation. [It was] not appropriate, something that I wouldn't do, but again, not something that would strike me as an impeachable offense."

"This is a terrible, terrible process, so what we should have is an appropriate process. If you pursue this properly, even though I might disagree about the merits, then the White House should comply and provide documents."

— from a [Philadelphia Inquirer](#) article titled "[Is the GOP rethinking impeachment? Not Pa. Sen. Pat Toomey.](#)"

"President Trump should rethink this decision immediately."

— from a [Politico](#) article titled "[Republicans drop their revolt against Trump on Syria.](#)" The piece noted that this week, Sen. Toomey's spokesperson said that the Senator now "opposes the administration's withdrawal from Northern Syria [but] supports sanctions targeting Turkey's military, economy, and top officials."

"My hope is this moment doesn't last terribly long, and after it has passed, we're able to — and maybe even more able to — pass some legislation... There has been no decision that the administration is not going to pursue this. I'm still very much in favor."

— from an article in [The Colorado Independent](#) titled "[Has impeachment quashed gun control prospects?](#)"

"It just continues to be a really, really difficult, challenging problem... It looks like there's at least a slight decline. Now it's not always clear whether that's because we have slightly less of an addiction problem, or we have a greater prevalence of Narcan. And maybe it's a combination, so the data will hopefully shed some light on that. "

— from a [WHYY](#) article titled "[Congress divided on whether to do more on opioids](#)"

"World War II required the mobilization of our entire country. The members of the Merrill's Marauders unit represented the bravery and determination that propelled the Allied troops to victory."

— from an article in [The Bradford Era](#) titled "[Toomey cosponsors measure honoring World War II heroes](#)"

## Learning about Legislation

### [H.R. 3: Lower Drug Costs Now Act of 2019](#)

Our friends at the [Pennsylvania Health Action Network](#) sent over some excellent information on the Democrats' new plan to address skyrocketing prescription drug prices. They shared this recap of the newly announced bill:

H.R. 3, the Lower Drug Costs Now Act, would finally require prescription drug companies to negotiate with Medicare for lower prices on a range of drugs. The benefits of those

negotiations would help not only people who are covered by Medicare, but also those covered by private insurance plans. This bill is transformative and long overdue.

The bill also penalizes drug companies for price gouging and stops them from charging Americans many times more than what people in other countries pay for the same drug. These are commonsense solutions that will help not only our seniors, but also millions of other Americans.

If you are interested in more of the specifics in the bill, you can find additional details in the *Washington Post* article titled "[Pelosi rolls out long-awaited bill to lower prescription drug costs.](#)" The sponsor of the bill, Rep. Frank Pallone (D-N.J.) the Chair of the House Committee on Energy and Commerce, included even more information in a [press release](#) on his website:

The Lower Drug Costs Now Act would level the playing field for American patients and taxpayers by:

- Ending the ban on Medicare negotiating directly with drug companies, and creating powerful new tools to force drug companies to the table to agree to real price reductions.
- Giving all Americans access to lower drug prices negotiated by the federal government.
- Stopping drug companies from ripping off Americans while charging other countries less for the same drugs by limiting the maximum price for any negotiated drug to be in line with the average price in countries like ours.
- Creating a new, \$2,000 out-of-pocket limit on prescription drug costs for Medicare beneficiaries and reversing years of unfair price hikes above inflation across thousands of drugs in Medicare.
- Reinvesting in innovation and the search for new cures and treatments. Pallone hopes to use the anticipated cost-savings from lowering drug prices to reinvest in the search for new breakthrough treatments and cures at the National Institutes of Health, as well as investing in our nation's health care including improvements to Medicare.

This is an issue that directly affects most Americans. Please consider taking the next step and calling Rep. Fitzpatrick if you feel Congress should pass this excellent new bill!

## **Call to Action - Support this Bill!**

### **[H.R. 3: Lower Drug Costs Now Act of 2019](#)**

As with the recap from our Learning about Legislation section, our allies at the [Pennsylvania Health Action Network](#) provided the scripting in support of H.R. 3. They suggest that this script can be used with any Member of Congress, regardless of their party:

"I'm calling today to encourage Rep. Fitzpatrick to support H.R. 3, the Lower Drug Costs Now Act. Since the addition of Part D to Medicare, the federal government has been squandering its purchasing power by not allowing Medicare to negotiate for lower prices. Seniors have been paying too-high prices for too long. For the sake of America's seniors and the rest of us who will also benefit from Medicare's negotiations for lower drug prices, please support the Lower Drug Costs Now Act."

PHAN also adds that if you have any experience with high, increasing or unstable prescription drug pricing, you should include information about your lived experience when you make your call. Please do put some time this week into calling your Representative in the House to let them know that **you support H.R. 3!**

This report brought to you by the Pennsylvania MoCTrack team...

Elayne Baker

Gary Garb

Helen a.k.a. @ElastigirlVotes

Linda Houk

Kierstyn Piotrowski Zolfo

We can always use additional assistance. Our Congresspeople are always busy and there is always more for us to cover — tasks big and small to fit any level of time commitment or experience. Can you help us out? Please email [KierstynPZ@gmail.com](mailto:KierstynPZ@gmail.com) and put "MoCTrack Help" in the subject. Thanks!